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Dragalevtsy. In general, though the division of labor was traditional, the specialization of occupation was increasing. Though unemployment was absent from the village, this in no way implied that all had the kind of work they wanted. It was astounding enough that even in times of world depression all did have a way of earning a living.

In Bulgaria, as in most countries, property passed from parent to child. There too the laws governing this transfer were very complicated. However, as a general principle in the villages sons inherited twice as much land as daughters. Usually the sons received equal amounts, but a father while still alive could divide the land, taking an equal share for himself, which he later gave to his favorite son. Quite often a sister said when the time of division arrived: "Why should I take land away from my brothers?" and forfeited her claim. In some cases she would sell her share of the estate cheaply to a favorite brother. If she was married, however, her husband could insist that she take what was her due and might even go to court to pursue the case. Every year there were a few Dragalevtsy people involved in long-drawn-out lawsuits originating over the division of inherited land. More often than not, lawyers' fees used up a great part of the value of the property.

A heavy inheritance tax accompanied any such transfer of property from the father to his children. One man at work in the hayfield took time off to tell me of the arrangement being worked out in his family:

"Our father, who is still living, told us three brothers to divide his property equally among us. We have not made the division officially as yet, because if we did we would have to pay an inheritance tax amounting to about four hundred dollars. We divide the land by lot. We take strips of land, both meadows and fields of equal value, and draw lots for the strips. Of course, our father has kept some of the land for himself, but we shall divide that among the three of us after his death."

The most serious conflicts in the village arose when there was disagreement over the division of a patrimony. Brother turned against brother, and whole families became involved in the dispute. There

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888 cide was by that time an out-of-date practice no longer linked with the precarious economic existence of a wandering people.

539 But it was a far cry from the cessation of the killing of aged
888 parents to the "Honor thy father and mother" of the Decalogue, which
593 later became a part of the Bulgarian family system. The peasants had another story to explain this dramatic change:

"In the olden days, when fathers died the sons would drag the bodies with a hook to a stream or gully and push the bodies in. One day a middle-aged man returned home from disposing of his father's body in this way, but failed to bring back the hook. Whereupon his own son in greeting him said:

" 'But, father, where is the hook? What will I use when I drag you away?'

"This made the father thoughtful, then remorseful. It was then that he retrieved his father's body and gave it a proper burial. Since then sons have been more respectful."

593 At any rate, whatever may be the explanation, the patriarchal
562 system with its respect for and obedience to the father won out. Con-
175 tact with Byzantine culture until the coming of the Turks must have
186 reinforced the Bulgarian father's right to dominate his family. He became more fully acquainted with the *patria potestas* which had been too strongly entrenched in the Roman family system to be forgotten by the Byzantines. Likewise, the patriarchal emphasis of the Old Testament and the Pauline epistles of the New aided in the continuance
175 of male supremacy. It is fascinating indeed to observe the response that the Slavicized Bulgarians made to the Byzantine culture in general. First they opposed cultural assimilation by force of arms; more than once the armies of the Bulgarian kings thundered at the gates of Constantinople in Bulgaria's proud golden age (about 900). Military expeditions, however, proved inadequate, with the result that the Bulgarian leaders sought to build a Slavic culture to rival that of the Greeks. It was this new culture which kept the feeling of national uniqueness alive among the Bulgarians, while other tribes upon entering that region became so thoroughly absorbed into the Byzantine Empire that they ended as curious names of the past with no modern representatives.

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[775] .587 Heaven in concrete terms and believed that husbands and wives would be reunited there. Things would work out quite well mathematically if a widow and widower remarried each other, since in Heaven each mate would go to the first spouse, thus avoiding the unheavenly complication of a second mate left alone for eternity. For a second wife, they listened to the recommendations of neighbors far more than they did when marrying the first time. This was borne out by the testimony of a woman I found picking berries from a bush that overhung a garden wall. While speaking to me she kept a watchful eye turned toward the near-by house in fear that someone would tell her to leave the berries alone. "How did you happen to marry Nikola?" I asked her. Like the other women she seemed to welcome a chance to talk about herself.

"For three years I was a widow in Simeonovo before somebody recommended me to my present husband, at that time a widower living here in Dragalevtsy. One day he came over to Simeonovo, looked me up, and asked me to marry him. I accepted right away although I had never heard of him before. Winter was coming on and I didn't have any money to buy food for myself and my little boy. I went immediately home with him and lived with him as his wife for two months before we were married."

Her second husband was one of the poorest men in the village, and her life was decidedly unhappy; yet to the village way of thinking, she was better off than as a widow.

● 593 Most of these second marriages turned out successfully provided the question of stepchildren could be satisfactorily settled. Sometimes fathers sent away their own children to a relative and gladly took in those of the second wife. Quite often the children of both the husband and wife were brought up together as one family. A second wife was generally anxious to have children by her second husband in order to ensure her place in his affections, especially if she had children by her first husband who ate up the food and wore the clothes provided by their stepfather.

587 837 Widows and widowers were permitted by public opinion to live together as though they were married for awhile before the actual ceremony took place. This above all else emphasized the fact that

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CHAPTER VI

MARRIAGE

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THE BULGARIAN groom settled down naturally into the role of the married man as the embarrassment of the first few days of good-natured joshing wore away. He took less and less interest in the Sunday afternoon promenade, preferring to sit in front of the tavern with the other married men where he liked to be complimented on the woman he had chosen in the same way that he would appreciate compliments on a cow just bought. However, as marriage progressed he began to respect his wife as a person rather than as a possession.

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It was when the first child arrived, in a year or so, that the husband suddenly felt a sense of tremendous importance. He was no longer just a married man; he was a father. Though the beginning of married life had little effect upon his behavior, the fact of parenthood changed even his facial expression, his earnestness in his work, and his whole attitude toward the future. I sensed this often in the requests that people made for photographs. Few young men came to ask for pictures of their brides; but many wanted pictures of their infants, especially of the sons. In the case of the first child they would hold him up squarely in front of the camera so that he would fill up the whole picture if possible. But as children continued to arrive year after year, the fathers often asked, "Could we get our new oxen into the picture too?"

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Most of the men accepted marriage as they did the weather: inevitable, sometimes balmy and sometimes disagreeable, but utterly essential. They did not go out of their way particularly to adjust themselves to marriage, and spoke little of marriage. They patiently waited for parenthood, which was revolutionary in its effect upon them.

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did the most talking. The women found it difficult to say which one helped the others most, because "this depends so much upon one's special knowledge of cooking, caring for the sick, and sewing." Each woman was expert in a different line, but all were willing to help in any way.

The distinction between age groups broke down when the group was hard at work, as the work was then more important than the flow of gossip. In general, the gossiping groups got together more frequently in the summertime and on Sundays. Women found their chief recreation with women, and men with men, though the men said they needed the stimulation of tavern society.

This willingness of the men to spend money for recreation and to limit their wives to the questionable joys of gossip illustrated the common saying, "Bulgaria is a man's country." A Dragalevtsy peasant saw nothing strange in the sight of a man riding a donkey while his wife trudged along behind carrying their purchases home from market. Or if a man returned alone from market, having ridden all the way in his wagon, his wife, tired from a day in the field, went out to carry in his things, saying, "He's weary and needs my help." She was always careful to make no queries about the day's activities, although she might be bursting with curiosity to know what had happened at market. She went about her work and waited until he was comfortably fed and settled, knowing full well that then she would have a complete report. Usually her husband made himself out to be the hero of each little episode, but "men are like that," she would say.

The well trained wife always deferred to her husband. If ever I asked a question in the presence of both, the woman turned her eyes to see what response her husband made. If he made a gesture as though to say, "You go ahead and answer," then she began to talk, becoming silent whenever her husband wished to interject any comments.

What was even more conclusive proof that Bulgaria was a man's country, and certainly that Dragalevtsy was a man's village, was the obedience of women to their husband's command. I asked thirty wives in the course of my family interviews:

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"Suppose you wanted to go to market some Friday and your husband thought you ought not to go, what would you do?"

Not a single wife would dare go to market under these circumstances. Two or three said, "I wouldn't even start for the door."

"But suppose you wanted to make some small purchases in the city and your husband disapproved, what would you do?" Only two daring ones out of the thirty said they would make these purchases if they had money.

It paid the women to "behave," because the husband did have the right to beat a disrespectful wife. I never happened upon a wife-beating, but the fact that a few husbands told me with pride, "I never beat my wife," showed me that they considered themselves exceptional.

A wife who received rough treatment, especially if her husband had been drinking, could go to her father's home. She could not stay there very long after her mate had become sober, because her father and the village in general made her feel that her place was with her husband no matter how disagreeable he might be. Usually she waited until her husband came with a meek promise of good behavior to ask her to come back.

In those formal ways a village wife showed respect to her husband. She did not, most of the time, find them burdensome because she knew nothing else. All of her experiences from childhood to marriage had conditioned her to a subordinate role. Should any woman have tried to rebel against her lot other women would have been her most vigorous critics. They, more than the men, aided in the perpetuation of the existing order.

The woman, however, had a far more important place than the social amenities would indicate. Men frankly admitted that they could not make a living without their wives. This feeling of dependence overshadowed the traditional masculine superiority to the extent that a partnership resulted. The man, to be sure, was the senior partner, but he knew that he was a member of a team in which co-operation was essential.

This deeper sense of partnership was best shown by the practice husbands had of consulting their wives on every matter of importance as well as on minor matters. Out of twenty-six representative cases,

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nineteen husbands always consulted their wives before doing anything such as selling a calf, hiring a servant, or building a small stable; four husbands consulted sometimes, and only three were so strong-willed and dominating that they never asked their wives' opinions. Many husbands said that their wives knew more than they did about the management of the farm, though these same wives modestly asserted that they knew very little. One man said: "That's why we are married: to ask each other." Quite a few husbands, having learned that it paid in the long run to consult the women, betrayed this by saying, "We have to ask," or "We have to listen to women."

Consulting, however, was not always the same as catering to the wives' wishes. I asked twenty-six husbands: "Suppose you had set your heart on buying something but your wife objected, what would you do?" Twelve said they would make the purchase anyway, three hedged a little in their answers, but eleven would buy nothing contrary to the wishes of their wives. This last group of eleven showed that to many men the judgment or wishes of the women meant far more than one would expect in "a man's country."

Much of a woman's hold upon her husband came about quite unconsciously on the part of either. The village wife was artless and ignorant of the wiles of a sophisticated society, but she knew that as long as she was efficient, decorous, and dutiful she could count upon continued support from her husband. She also knew that she was not in competition with adventuresses or with women, jaded and disappointed, frantically seeking excitement to enliven their days. Instead, the Dragalevtsy woman felt secure. With her there was a solemn finality about marriage to which her husband and others in the village subscribed.

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She expected no courteous gestures or terms of endearment from her husband. Her name sufficed. Only three couples out of twenty-seven used affectionate names for each other, these taking such forms as *bulka* (bride), *baba* (old woman), and the like, but never *dear, darling,* or *sweetheart.* One of the three men who used such names saved them for times when his wife did not listen, and then he used several to get her attention. The occidental practice of kissing was little used by the married couples, though the younger generation was

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593 562 [581] beginning to imitate "the people of the world" in this respect. As the psychological aspect of the sexual relationship between husband and wife varied with each couple, no generalization could be made except to point out that sex seemed to be a concomitant of marriage rather than the basis of marriage. Mates were picked by young men more for their potentialities as hard-working farm hands than for their sexual attractiveness. Quite often before marriage a sort of affection had grown up between the couple; more often affection came after marriage and increased as the partnership proved successful and the feeling of mutual dependence deepened.

Most of these couples freely, sometimes jokingly, admitted that they quarreled more or less, even when they were in many respects fortunately adjusted to each other. Nevertheless, in only one-third of the cases did this quarreling lead to a permanent cause of conflict.

273 593 The disciplining of children by the husband frequently aroused the wife to indignation, but perhaps not to such a depth as did his late arrival from the tavern in an intoxicated condition. Few Bulgarian men drank to get drunk. Intoxication, when it came, was often the result of overenthusiastic observance of drinking customs. For instance, when men drank in the saloon all of them ordered drink and food not only for themselves but for the whole table, everybody paying for what he had ordered before leaving; the people always toasted health, long life, or happiness when they raised a glass of wine, beer, or whisky, at home, in the tavern, or in the field; at feasts *rakiya* was served before the people began to eat; during the meal they drank wine. A drunken man was sent out of the tavern at closing time, and it was up to him to get himself home, even though he fell down several times en route. If he was having too great a difficulty, some companions might lead him. If they were not around, the policeman or night watchman might act as guide. At his approach, the children hid and the wife became afraid. The villagers said: "Even an insane man runs away from the drunken." Sometimes in order to sober up the drunken man, people put a little urine or horse manure (substances rich with ammonia) in his mouth. The chief complaint the women made against drinking was economic, the spending of money "for nothing," as they said.

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complaint the women made against drinking was economic, the spending of money "for nothing," as they said. 000

Husbands and wives also disagreed frequently over the importance of a certain task, since the husband was likely to order the wife to work in the field when she felt it necessary to complete some task at the house. Money was often a source of conflict. Since all the villagers were members of the same church they rarely argued about religion, the few discussions which did arise being about the desirability or undesirability of church attendance. One of the most significant results of this study of village families was to show how little disagreement there was concerning in-laws, since husband and wife usually stood together as a unit against these outsiders, whether they belonged to her family, his family, or had married their son or daughter. 593 [771] [606]

In spite of these quarrels about discipline, drink, and jobs to be done, most couples considered their marital venture highly successful. I believe that an important reason for the success of marriage in Dragalevtsy was the recognition on the part of husband and wife that even love was not an answer to all of life's problems. They took each day's pleasures and disappointments as they came, rejoicing or sorrowing in quiet unison.

Many times as I listened to the husband or wife gravely narrating with satisfaction and pride the calm and uneventful story of their marriage partnership, details of the room in which we were sitting would strike me with such force that I had to recall myself with an effort to the conversation. We always sat in the best room; sometimes it was the only room. It was always the room where the family lived. The chief furniture was a bed, perhaps two or even three beds. And here two or three couples and their children spent their days and nights. I would try to imagine married life under such circumstances. [342]

Life of any kind became not merely a matter of privacy, but really a problem of where to carry on the necessary daily activities without getting in another's way. And yet, in most of these crowded households the marriage bond had grown strong. If there was no actual happiness, I often saw a friendly contentment and a mutual regard, particularly as the couple grew older and could look back upon years of joint achievement.

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intelligentsia, when it came to the point dared not run counter to the old village sanctions against divorce.

More often it was the husband who left the home. When he did and in rare cases interested himself in another woman, the villagers did all in their power to make him return. If he refused at first, they made him feel the indignation of public opinion, treating him as an outcast and sometimes going to the length of beating him. If he remained in the village, he had no choice but to go back to his wife. During the time he was away his wife also was put to shame, getting little sympathy from the general public. She knew, furthermore, that in case of a divorce both parties would be held guilty by the villagers, so she was willing to take her husband back and get along with him as best she could. A divorced man was considered to have loose morals; a divorced woman would have been thought thoroughly bad. There was thus a situation in which everyone was expected to marry, with no sanctioned way out once the marriage contract had been entered upon. Though such an attitude meant that unfortunate marriages had to drag on interminably, it also had the effect of forcing couples to adjust themselves to each other.

Dragalevtsy seemed a curiosity indeed: a village in which marriage was little questioned, where there was practically no marital unfaithfulness, and no divorce. What were the reasons for the family stability? For one thing, life was still lived according to ancient customs. People only recently had begun to wonder about the age-old patterns which they had been following so faithfully. Some writers would call them the "dead hand of the past," others "the cake of custom." Whatever their name, they were conducive to a common understanding of the place of marriage. All the people expected the same things from life and from the home.

Then, too, earning their living by farming was a joint enterprise. People got used to putting their shoulders to the wheel as a family group. In addition to what they all did together, women were supposed to do certain things, men other things, and children still other things. As long as every person did his part there was no friction, but quiet efficiency. Furthermore, the presence of a number of relatives made for greater stability. In the case of apparent misunderstanding

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between a husband and wife, the proper relative intervened to suggest a way out. Most of the husband's relatives were in the same locality with him and could keep an eye on his behavior.

One was not only tied closely to the husband's blood kin *(rodstvo)* but had to enter upon a formal relationship with one's in-laws. Families related by marriage felt close to each other, the intensity of the feeling depending upon the frequency with which the families met and the way the young couples got along. Ordinarily, however, the family of the bride was considered by the husband's parents to be as close, at times even closer, than blood relatives. For instance, if there was any sort of celebration to which guests were invited, the family of the bride was the first to be asked. One reliable informant estimated that ninety out of one hundred people in Dragalevtsy felt the force of *svatovstvo,* or this relationship springing up through intermarriage. The young people, who are usually so prone to make a break with the past, maintained it in all its vigor. Here was the way one young man explained the *svatovstvo:*

"If my sister married some man in Simeonovo, even though I had never seen him before, his brother and sister would be my *svati,* and if I met them we would feel like cousins. I would never curse them or quarrel with them and would call their father *'dedo'* and their mother *'baba,'* the same names I use for my own grandparents. My parents and the parents of my new brother-in-law would likewise be *svati* and would treat one another reverently." Two brothers could not marry two sisters from another family, though there was no blood relationship, because the second couple were *svati* after the first couple married, and *svati* could not marry. Two brothers could marry two first cousins, but not two sisters. This feeling of closeness in families related by marriage did not stop with the husband and the wife, nor with the single in-law gained by each family. It included, as well, the in-law's parents and brothers and sisters with whom just dealings and proper behavior had always to prevail.

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More than anything else, however, the shared activities of husband and wife developed an understanding which lasted through thick and thin. Some of these shared activities were the trip to market, the

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Christmas Eve feast, Easter festivities, and the ceremonies on St. George's Day.

Roughly two-thirds of adult Dragalevtsy was in Sofia on an average Friday. On Thursday evenings the village was already bubbling with excitement. The wagons had already been loaded. All that was necessary in the dim light on Friday morning was the yoking of the sleepy oxen. Soon cart after cart would creak heavily down from the village, overtaking those peasants who cheerfully made the long trip by foot. By the time sleepy city-dwellers were breakfasting, the village was well on its way to the outside world.

Once in Sofia there were four possible destinations for the peasant wagon: the cattle market, the mill, the big curb market, or the *Bezisten Pazar* (another smaller market).

The cattle market was located across the city, back of the railroad station, near the municipal cemetery. This market was owned and managed by the municipality. Every peasant before passing into the enclosure with a beast had to pay the tax of ten leva. The sun had already grown warm by the time the Dragalevtsy peasant and his wife passed through side streets to this square, packed with bargaining, shouting men and noisy animals. Usually the women sat outside the square in their wagons loaded with pumpkins and peppers in season, though once in a while a woman accompanied her husband through the bargaining and sale of the animal. The bright blue uniforms of the police were very much in evidence in this dusty confusion, where hard bargains sometimes led to fist fights. At the east end, gypsies raced their not too spirited horses up and down to prove to would-be purchasers the absence of defects. At the northeast side, the red-eyed water buffaloes and their dirty little black calves moved restlessly because of biting flies. To the northwest, along the iron rail the oxen ruminated.

Through the tumult and dust wandered the sellers of *boza* (fermented millet drink) and the vendors of round *gevretsi* (small rings of bread); here a man was eating a melon near a sucking calf. I was always interested in those performing *pazarluk*, which was the method of clinching a bargain. The buyer and the seller of an animal would stand shaking hands as the seller demanded an unreasonably high

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individuals were celebrating their name days with appropriate hospitality. 796

Bulgarian children did not hang up their stockings on Christmas Eve but, if their parents were being influenced by modern ideas, did find a present or two at the foot of their bed when they woke up in the morning. They immediately ran to kiss the hands of their father and mother. They called Santa Claus *"Dedo Koleda,"* which meant "Grandfather Christmas." He did not wear a bright red, white-furred costume but had on a brown homespun outfit that corresponded more nearly to the peasant's manner of dress.

On these ceremonial occasions the father and mother presided [593] with quiet dignity over the celebrations. They were accorded every respect by their children. As the Christmases passed, the couple's feeling of partnership deepened. Each year left its accumulation of memories, about which husband and wife said little, but about which they could feel sure the other was thinking.

Christmas and the holidays that followed were only a prelude to [785] *Velikden*—literally, the Great Day—the day of Christ's resurrection. On the eighth Sunday before Easter, or *Mesni Zagovezni* (meat fast), all those who kept the long Easter fast stopped eating meat. The following Sunday was *Sirni Zagovezni* (cheese fast) after which those fasting gave up all milk products. This Sunday itself was a day of great feasting on all sorts of cheese products. On both Sundays fires were lit; on *Mesni Zagovezni* there was a great fire at night in the village square, and on *Sirni Zagovezni* almost every household lighted a fire in the yard around which the youngsters waved burning straw stuck in the cleft end of a stick and chanted an ancient couplet

> Orata, Kopata!
> Dai mi, chicho, momata

whose significance had vanished with the ages.

On this Sunday, and the three days preceding, all quarrels among 796 the villagers were settled, everyone visiting his neighbors and relatives 578 to beg pardon for real or fancied offenses. The quiet that reigned over the village on the evening of *Sirni Zagovezni* was little short of wonderful. At the break of day the children had risen to kiss their

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The story of married life, of life in common, could be retold in many ways. Underneath it all was a realistic acknowledgment that marriage had its ups and downs. As long as one felt useful and needed, then it had its satisfactions too. Often people ask, "Are those peasants happy with such a family system?" There is no adequate answer. Happiness is a state of mind, and the meaning of happiness varies from culture to culture as well as from person to person. On the whole, Bulgarian husbands and wives were happy, for they were getting from marriage what they expected and were untroubled by alternatives. Furthermore, life to them was more than a frenzied search for happiness. It was rather the serious fulfillment of customary duties, the performing of daily tasks to keep one's people and one's animals alive, and the taking of sufficient time to cultivate the art, almost lost in our civilization, of forming personal relationships which stood the test of time. Under these circumstances happiness came as it only can, as a by-product of rich life experiences.

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855 people had reconciled themselves to comparative poverty: abundance of children in contrast to the abundance of goods. When I asked her if they gave the children any special food, she answered: "No, certainly not. They eat the same food as the older people. If they want to eat, we let them eat. If they do not want to eat, who is to be blamed?" Children's mealtimes were a matter of convenience. They asked for food when they were hungry, receiving a crust of bread if the adult was not too busy.

The mother-in-law usually took care of the children, especially while they were babies, because she was considered more capable and experienced than the young mother. There were cases in the village where a comparatively young mother-in-law took such complete care of her son's children that the mother of the children did not know what it meant to have children and to care for them.

When people went to work in the fields and there was no woman to remain with them in the home, the children were left by themselves on the streets.

"Doesn't the Village Council do anything to aid these children?" I asked.

"Oh, the *Obshtina* takes care of some children, but what can it do when it is not from the same blood? It is only to shut the eyes and the mouths of the peasants for the very high taxes they pay to the *Obshtina*."

The children were not well dressed. Their clothes were often dirty and ragged. One tired mother of several complained: "Can a child keep anything on his back clean and not torn? Now you put on his back something clean and new, and when he returns from playing in the street it is all wet, dirty, and often torn. So children do not deserve to have good and new clothes." Often their clothes were made out of garments discarded by adults, though they did receive new garments at Christmas.

858 593 But even though the peasants did not "tremble over" their children, they valued them highly. When they first came they were tokens of a successful marriage. The husband and wife had both borne fruit and so had conformed to the expected life cycle. As the children grew older, however, they became important as economic

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assets. They could do hard work; they could run countless errands. Later, they were the heirs to the father's fields and the chief support of the parents in their declining years.

One of the first women I interviewed about family life told me: "I had a little boy but he died when forty days old. Now I cannot help crying every St. George's Day [May 6] and every St. Dimiter's Day [November 8] when my husband goes out to hire a boy to care for our sheep. If my son had lived, he could have taken care of the sheep for us."

Later on in the course of a conversation with a garrulous *baba* I asked her if she did not think her seven children too many for one woman to have. She snorted, pointed out of the window to her sons unloading wood they had gathered in the forest, and said: "If I hadn't had lots of children, who would go to get our wood?"

Sons were greater economic assets than girls but even so would have normally received more attention in this man-centered society. As parents often had to go to some expense to get their daughters married off, they were always jubilant at the arrival of a son. The good-natured priest was occasionally the butt of a number of sly jests because he had three daughters and no son. One man in particular, Stefan, who had been in the same predicament, had recently acquired a son, who was now the apple of his eye. He was fond of his daughters, but made no secret of his particular pride in his boy. I thoroughly enjoyed a conversation between Stefan and the priest in which Stefan fully explained how to be sure the next one was a boy. I have known of fathers who refused to look at the newly arrived infant upon learning that it was a girl. Of course, they eventually acquiesced and simply hoped for better luck next time. Where parents had no sons, village curiosity reached a peak when a new child was expected, and an occasional wager was laid on the possibility of its being a boy. But favoritism was the exception rather than the rule. When you asked a Dragalevtsy parent which child he liked best he responded: "I like them all equally; they are just like the fingers on one's hand." He often added the proverb, "The fingers on one's hand feel pain equally, do they not?"

Whenever a child suffered from a physical or mental handicap Dragalevtsy parents, like most parents around the world, were more

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solicitous than they would have been if the child were normal. A peasant named Vladimir once invited me to his home for what I thought was to be a chat about life in general. We walked through the sturdy gate, slushed through the mud in the yard, and lowered our heads as we entered the house's one large room. The children scurried out of our way while Yurdanka, his wife, offered us each a low three-legged stool. Not far from the stove in the center of the room I saw in the dim light what appeared to be a teen-aged girl, drooling and entirely oblivious to our presence. Vladimir, Yurdanka, and I talked about many things while their younger children sat on the bed and listened intently. Then the father brought up the matter of their feeble-minded daughter:

"*Tova e nashe neshtastie*" (This is our misfortune), he said. And then he told me her story. Some illness, probably meningitis, had arrested her mental development at an early age. Doctors had given them no hope and they wondered if I, a foreigner, knew of something they could do. Their faces showed the suffering that had touched their lives: the comments of misunderstanding, superstitious neighbors, and the constant attention they had to pay to the child's physical needs. Truly she was their misfortune. I knew that the treatment of the mentally deficient and mentally ill in Bulgaria was still in that tragic stage where the unfortunates were confined and given almost no scientific treatment. The parents wanted more than that. It was with a heavy heart that I left them, for their misfortune was not only that of economic loss, but of seeing a wasted life sharing the one living room of the tiny house.

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The child, whether grown or small, approached the father through the mother. Though not universally the case, most Dragalevtsy children told their mother what they wanted and then asked her to relay this request to the father. The mother did so quite willingly, for she felt much closer to the children than the father. In this way the distance between father and children was traditionally maintained, increasing filial respect.

There were accepted ways for children to show their respect to the parents. The traditional patterns all centered around the father: standing up when he entered the room; waiting for him to eat first;

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kissing his hand and toasting him before drinking *rakiya* at ceremonial dinners. The newer patterns, such as little children giving a goodnight kiss, which had penetrated a few of the homes, centered around the mother. 593

For instance, in a family where three married sons dwelt in the same room with their parents and three unmarried brothers, one of the married sons said: "Our little children sometimes kiss the hands of the grown-ups before going to bed, and we married sons always kiss our parents' hands before drinking *rakiya* at home. We never quarrel with our father; if we are dissatisfied, we do not dare raise our voices." The married sons are thirty-six, twenty-seven, and twenty-five years old.

But sometimes the tables were turned. There was another case of a sixty-eight year old father who had entrusted the management of the estate to his thirty-four year old son. He had to consult his son before spending any money or doing anything around the place. The household still respected him in many ways though not leaving him much authority. He took comfort in at least one thing: "I am always the one to begin the meal, and all wait for me to begin before they start to eat."

One home which I studied made a great deal out of forms and ceremonies and was one of the best regulated and happiest homes I found. The children were doing excellently at school, and I came upon them studying their lessons even in the pasture while tending the sheep, a most extraordinary thing. The mother had been orphaned at an early age, appreciated a mother's role, and took her task seriously; the father likewise considered his parenthood as a real obligation and was ambitious for his children. When the children got up in the morning they put on their shoes, ran to the street fountain to wash, returned to say their prayers and then to kiss the hands of the elders, the youngest son kissing the hands of his older brothers (aged thirteen and twelve). Every day the mother reminded them: "Today you will be good."

When daughters married, they never returned to live at home except under the most unusual circumstances. If the father was without a housekeeper, he might ask his married daughter, accompanied 591

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591 by her husband, to come and live with him. Most married daughters
574 liked to visit in their parental homes on Sundays and other holidays, with their children and their husbands. While the frequency of visitation naturally varied with the daughters' sociability, it was significant that the daughters of wealthy peasants returned more often for visits than the daughters of poor peasants. There might have been an economic as well as a filial motive involved in this visitation. Married daughters still living in Dragalevtsy frequently called on their mothers, and helped them through difficult times. In more than half of the homes the married daughter-mother bond was kept intact, a source of comfort to both parties.

● 593 Married sons living with their parents were far more considerate of them than sons who had separated and lived in houses of their own. While in the paternal home they were subject to the authority of the old people, especially to that of the father. Sons living separately had no reason to obey the father if, as was usual in such cases, the property had already been divided. Though he might go to his father for advice, he was just as apt to seek the advice of tavern cronies. Of course, there were many variations of this situation. One thirty-eight year old son, married but not living in the paternal home, consulted his father about everything of importance—buying land, selling animals, building a house.

In another case, where the youngest son and his family lived in the paternal home with the widowed mother, the son got along extremely well with the mother. For instance, when she slapped him resoundingly because he had gone to the drink-shop, he simply smiled and said: "All right, you have the right to do that." He consulted his mother about many things, saw to it that she did not do heavy work and that she had an honorable place in the household.

In one household the twenty-six year old son spent little time at home because of his job as the *Obshtina* courier. He and his father experienced considerable conflict because he did not hand over his earnings to the old man but spent them on his own needs. At the same time he was living and eating free of charge in his father's house, much to the satisfaction of his mother who championed him before her husband. Naturally the son was dissatisfied with staying at home,

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for, in the words of his father, "he does not like the village work and wants something lighter. He wants to go to Sofia." The son obeyed his father most of the time as regards work assigned, but paid less attention to what his mother said. He went with any girl he liked, though his father, who in his youth married a girl of whom his parents had disapproved, insisted that if the son did the same, he would turn the son's wife out into the street.

This case was quite typical of most village young men. They performed, though unwillingly at times, whatever tasks their father ordered them to do, but paid little attention to the mother, since "she is a woman and doesn't understand man's work." A smaller number listened to the advice of their parents in the choice of girl friends, but most looked upon that as a personal matter in which parents should not interfere. One father who made a matter-of-fact adjustment to the situation said, "I can't keep a candle for my son in the streets," meaning that he could not go before him to light up his path.

When young men kicked against the traces, the older people did not become particularly disturbed. At times they were annoyed, but there was a general feeling that once the boy got married he would settle down to the conventional routine. This tolerant viewpoint was supported by even the staid middle-aged men, who liked to give the impression that they had been wild and troublesome in their youth. This complacency would have been less widespread if the parents had realized how greatly conditions had changed in one generation.

Unmarried daughters caused little trouble to their parents. They were ordinarily obedient to both father and mother, but, like the sons, quarrelled most often with their mothers, for they were with them more and felt that the mother loved them more than the father. Daughters in three-fourths of Dragalevtsy's homes went with any boys they chose, though some parents were firm in stating that the young man must be suitable before they gave their consent to marriage. It was highly doubtful whether this threat had much effect on the young. One father, apparently devoted to his twenty-year-old daughter, whipped her for going with young men of whom he disapproved and quarreled much with his son of eighteen.

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562 If a daughter failed to marry, she spent the rest of her life in her father's home and received sympathy only as long as her mother was alive. Her father and married brothers thought of her as a servant in the home and treated her accordingly. Fortunately there was rarely more than one old maid at a time in Dragalevtsy.

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562 The treatment of younger children, of course, varied greatly with the home. Children in Dragalevtsy were accustomed to being yelled at from their first toddling days by displeased older people. As we have already seen, there was no question about boys being preferred to girls in most homes, especially if there was only one boy among several girls. In such homes it was the boy who received the presents when the father returned from town, and who was picked up first; it was the boy whom the parents held when they asked to be photographed.

[861] Whipping, which was usually done by the father, was such an effective check on misbehavior that parents often needed only to threaten it. Another method of punishment was to withhold bread from the child for two or three hours, but, as one father said, "This doesn't always work, especially if the child begins to cry."

[357] Some parents, when they were unable to make ends meet, sent a girl off to Sofia to work as a domestic. One family revealed that five years previously a twelve-year-old daughter had been sent to be a servant in Sofia; she would never return to the village to live, nor did she ever come to visit. In this case the parents could not support an extra person, so chose the simplest way out. The fact that many Bulgarian families in cities sought female servants from twelve to eighteen years of age made such a practice possible. Indeed, on St. Dimiter's Day (November 8) and St. George's Day (May 6) there used to be a "servant bazaar" in Sofia. Village girls went to a certain place and stood in a row where housewives could look them over like heifers and choose a maid. Changes in servants, including shepherds, were ordinarily made only at these two times during the year.

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857 Should parents find a job for a teen-aged boy, the father might require the boy to accept the job. Most boys wanted work; only a few resented working at all. If a father had more sons than he needed on the farm, he sometimes chose a trade for or with the boy. Such

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boys usually became cobblers, tailors, or tanners. In all cases where the sons remained to work in the village, they were expected to turn over to the father a part or all of their earnings. This practice once more emphasized the economic importance of children.

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As far as I could discover, none of the villagers resented my questions into their personal affairs. More than once, after the routine interviewing was over, a man unburdened himself of some hurt or grievance that revealed more than any questionnaire could. It was through such outpourings that I realized how land could dominate or warp completely otherwise normal family relationships of father and sons or brother and brother.

Lonely old Bai Dimiter held especial interest for me since his wife had earlier told about incidents in his past which helped me to understand better why he began to drink so much that his girls felt ashamed of being called his daughters; to see how he bore his loss of economic and social position in the village owing to bad business methods coupled with a disabling accident. The key to the whole situation was the fact that his own father had tricked him in his early married days. After the son had paid off a heavy debt owed by his father, the father refused to deed him meadows in return but frankly confessed: "I fooled you in order to get money." To make the deception harder to bear, Dimiter inherited no land from his father, all of it going to another son with whom the father had been on better terms. Naturally, Dimiter had a falling out with his brother, and took the matter to the courts where, after long litigation, he failed to obtain any part of the inheritance.

The books I had read about Bulgaria in the old days pointed out the role the older brother formerly played when the father died. One village home was actually operated on the old principle of subordination of the younger brother to the older. Hristo, the older brother, was smaller than the younger brother, standing huge and stooped in the low-ceilinged room in such a way that the kerosene lamp cast a grotesque, mountainous shadow behind him. I knew, of course, about these men, as I knew about most village men, from the talk of tavern groups and other willing informants. I knew that they were ashamed of their family name which meant "the son of a donkey," and I knew

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that Hristo had served in the first World War and had been taken as a prisoner to France, which gave him a definite claim to distinction in the village. He talked easily and willingly of the war but just as willingly turned to discuss the arrangement whereby his brother and he, with their large families, lived in the same room in comparative harmony. In the first place, Sando, the younger, submitted to Hristo's authority, but Hristo, in turn, did not make or execute any plans without consulting his brother. Hristo had the task of managing the farm and doing the field work, marketing the products, and laying in the meager supplies; Sando worked as a teamster and as a day laborer if necessary to earn extra funds for the common treasury kept by Hristo. Some idea of the trust that the younger brother had in the older came from the knowledge that the wages of each long day's work, the pay for every laborious haul, went to the older brother. He spent it as it was needed together with the profits from the farm; he gave the money to the younger brother for clothing his children, for buying his wife new *tsarvuli* (pigskin sandals); he also took for his own use whatever he deemed necessary, though never abusing his prerogative. This was the only such relationship which I came across, simply because brothers did not live together as much as they used to, even in Dragalevtsy, ordinarily so tenacious of the older forms of life.

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The lot of an unmarried brother in the paternal home managed by an elder brother was likewise one of subordination. I visited one home which bore the unmistakable signs of belonging to a dairyman: milky buckets littered the inside; cows hopelessly switched at flies coming from the ever-present manure piles all over the yard. In the course of the conversation I learned that there was little difficulty between the brothers concerning work: the younger together with the wife of the older got up long before daybreak to milk and prepare the milk for Sofia; later on the older brother got up at the same time as his widowed mother to breakfast and started on his daily trek to Sofia and back. Whenever the younger man had extra money he gave it to the older, with the understanding that he could ask for what he needed. There was one source of trouble in the brotherly relationship arising out of the attempt on the part of the older to dictate whom the younger should marry. The inconsistency in this de-

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mand cropped out when the older brother's wife and mother admitted that the older brother had married against the wishes of his parents, and had brought his wife home to a round of constant toil and insufficient sleep. It was not surprising that the younger brother insisted on the right to choose his own friends, probably with the determination that upon marriage he would not live with his older brother, no matter how desperate the financial conditions might be. 593

Married sons living with their father and under his domination usually relied upon one another for mutual sympathy and understanding, at times acting as a unit in dealing with the older people. Between brothers who lived apart the relationship was often cordial, especially if they had been able to clear the greatest, most dangerous hurdle of all, the division of the inheritance. The younger continued to call the older *bate,* "my big brother," and went often to him for counsel, for loans, for aid in the fields, gladly repaying in kind. They saw much of each other in a social way, since they associated with men of the same age; their familial problems were often the same. The bond existed, not crystallizing into a situation where one submitted to the authority of the other, but rather into one in which the brothers felt equal. This type of relationship was growing with the trend toward smaller households.

The relationship between sisters never had to take the definite form which the brother-brother relationship assumed, for there was no situation possible from the village point of view in which a married sister could command a younger married sister. In the first place, married sisters always lived apart, and distance lent enchantment. In the second place, their husbands, and not they, were primarily disturbed if there was any irregularity in the division of their estate; therefore, any ill-feeling developing over a lawsuit was reflected rather than actual. When the parents died, unmarried sisters found refuge in a married sister's home if there was no married brother; normally, however, the unmarried sister went to live with a brother, since he was still living on the father's farm in which she had a right to share. Sisters who lived in the same village saw much of each other when they got together to card and spin wool on weekdays; and they visited together on Sundays. 768

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Although this insight into the relations between parents and their children, both adult and immature, has taken us beyond the period of childhood, it does show us why the children had to learn obedience and respect and why the village would soon show its dissatisfaction with anyone who flouted the established rules. Children also learned to defer to an older brother or sister, and assumed responsibility for those who were younger. In the main, a child's life was centered about the home and about those activities which he shared with members of his immediate family or the relatives in the neighborhood who were young enough to be his playmates.

Children became acquainted with their relatives in other villages on the annual *Subor* or "At Home Day" which each village observed. Dragalevtsy families had four village *Subori* which they could attend; on Pantaley Den (August 9) they could go to Boyana; on Spasov Den (the Monday of the eighth week after Easter) they could go to Durvenitsa; on Petkov Den (October 27) they could visit Bistritsa; and on Archangel Day (November 21) they could visit Simeonovo.

I once attended this Simeonovo *Subor* with the Dragalevtsy families. I was told gravely by the old women that on this day everyone must be especially good, for the Archangel Michael was the one who received the souls of the dead into heaven. On the day preceding, the Simeonovo women had gathered to make many loaves of bread from flour previously donated to the church by its loyal supporters. Early on the morning of the *Subor* the church sexton with some helpers killed four sheep for the big meat stews; later he gave terse commands regarding the flavoring of the stews: bean and mutton, cabbage and mutton, and rice and mutton—a somewhat monotonous menu, but one hallowed by tradition.

We started our four-mile walk at an early hour. The air was crisp and so clear that the great Balkan range, miles across the plain, stood out sharply in its rose and blue. By midmorning a large number of people, including the children, had come into the churchyard. Most of them entered the church and attended part of the service; the women carried bread and boiled corn to be blessed by the priest, who received a portion. At noon, the church service was concluded and the priest blessed the meal prepared under the auspices of the church. Then it

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658 871 government through the Ministry of Education. Parents had no fee to pay, unless the child continued his education in a gymnasium in Sofia.

[593] [861] There was, the director said, a noticeable relationship between the type of home and success in school work. Uneducated parents did not provide good conditions for study, since the pupils had no tables on which to write, no quiet, and lived in unhygienic surroundings. The more intelligent parents did their best to remedy such defective conditions. Most of the children had a great desire to study, but unfortunately many parents killed this enthusiasm. They either sent their children to tend the cattle, or, if the student gave lessons as an excuse for not doing some task, the parent said, "You don't need all that stuff from books."

876 At times the teachers gave some of the poor but bright students garments, shoes, and caps. The students receiving the mark six (excellent) were taken free of charge on a trip to a theater in Sofia, were given a free bath at the public bathhouse, and a large bowl of soup in a Sofia restaurant. As the director said, "Prizes help a great deal to stimulate study, and those who do not attain them are very disappointed." Five or six times a year the teachers took the older pupils to Sofia to visit the zoological gardens, the museums, a monastery, and sometimes a movie theater.

871 A glance at the list of courses on page 135 shows how the subjects were distributed through the first seven years of school. The tendency had been to follow the conventional courses of Western Europe, without any real adaptation to the needs of the villagers.

872 The textbooks, uniform for the whole Sofia district, were chosen by the Ministry of Education. While most students bought their own paperback textbooks, the school had approximately $245 in its budget for a textbook loan library to aid the poor students. The teachers assigned written work at intervals; for instance, the teacher in history and geography would give homework every five or six lessons, the teacher in arithmetic every day. All students recited daily because of the small number in the class, but written tests and examinations were not employed to the extent they are in American schools. Near the end of the semester one written lesson was required in each

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ment mark was written on his diploma, thus following him throughout life. Therefore teachers found it more of a trial to lower a student's conduct mark than to fail him scholastically. All discipline cases were sent to the director, who reprimanded the student or sent the child home to his parents. The law did not permit corporal punishment, although many parents would have been glad to give the director the right. The final step, to which the director seldom resorted, was to require the student to attend school in a neighboring village.

There was little friction between the parents and the local school authorities, probably because the schools were a branch of the government and one seldom protested loudly against the government. If some trouble arose, parents complained to the school director, who passed the complaint on to the mayor.

There was nothing in Dragalevtsy, or in any other Bulgarian village, comparable to our Parent-Teacher Association. The very old peasants still regarded the government school as an outside and, therefore, slightly suspicious innovation—valuable for "the people of the world" perhaps, but yet to be proved indispensable for the village. Most of them agreed that the school widened the already existing difference in attitude between young and old. I once heard a good-humored disagreement between a mother and her twenty-five-year-old son. The woman had been explaining to me that she went to church to pray to God to help with the fields, to send rain and sunshine.

"But mother," interrupted the son impatiently, "the rain doesn't come from God."

"From where does it come then?"

The son sighed as though he were exhausted by endless repetition of a lesson to a stubborn child.

"From vapors up above, as the books tell us."

The old woman grinned undaunted.

"Well, God gives the vapors."

In spite of the suspicion toward anything new, the peasants were, on the whole, favorable toward education. While they slyly pointed out instances of unemployment among the intelligentsia, they were shrewd enough to see the economic advantages of formal schooling. Many villagers told me of a Dragalevtsy man who got a gymnasium

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Kosharki (Sheep folds). This was a game which had been played extensively a generation ago, but its use was dying out in the village. The children would build miniature sheep folds, houses, and fences out of rocks. This game corresponded after a fashion to our building with blocks.

The outstanding characteristic of all these games was that they required little equipment and few participants. At home, the play groups were inevitably restricted to the family and nearest neighbors, often relatives. At school, children could choose relatives and other children in the same grade. Play groups in the fields were formed on the basis of family ownership of land and common pasture. These latter groups often gathered in the village and went to the fields together, the youngsters carrying loaves of bread, baked peppers, and fresh tomatoes. Even in play, the family was important, for every type of play group almost automatically included relatives. As was previously pointed out, there was less quarreling among the children who were related. I often heard: "You shouldn't hit him; he's your relative."

The new types of play were still limited. The radio, comic papers, and movies were almost unknown to the village child, just as they were to the average adult. Only twenty-five newspapers reached the village daily, and these had few comic strips. Magazines and books were a rarity. Sofia bookshops had some exquisite children's books, but I never saw one in the village. Sometimes when I came into a village home on a winter evening, I would see an unforgettable picture. Near the fire the father sat quietly, elbows on knees, the mother was spinning near the one dim electric bulb, and in the center, crouched at the low table, a boy, nine or ten years old, was laboriously reading some fragment of a periodical to his parents. Their pride and pleasure was unspoken but obvious.

There was one radio in the village, and the children were of course conscious of it as it blared incessantly in Renaissance Square, but it was not a part of their life, any more than the movies or trains. Only 45 per cent of the total population, including babies, had ever attended a movie, and less than 40 per cent had ever been on a train.

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[369] 857 With Sofia, a city of over a quarter million people, only five miles away, the ability of the villagers to resist, however passively, the influence of the "people of the world" was astonishing. It was a remoteness, not to be measured in miles, but in generations.

Such pleasant customs as keeping pets were almost nonexistent. The tiny puppies with which the children sometimes rolled were bred for strictly utilitarian purposes, to guard the sheep, and were taught to be unfriendly to man.

[888] The very young and the very old in the village spent much time together. When I was taken to pay my respects to the oldest man in the village, a venerable figure of over a century, we found him sitting in a sunny corner of the yard under a gnarled pine tree. Tumbling around him were half a dozen tiny children, somewhat hampered in their movements by their clumsy, heavy clothing but very proud to show off their ancient relative.

The older children derived a quiet amusement from their position as spectators at the village ceremonies. There were always little boys making merry along the path of a wedding procession or tramping along wide-eyed beside a funeral. At *Subori* and *hora* mischievous little boys were ubiquitous. The little girls stayed solemnly by their mothers; only their eyes wandered, alternately solemn and amused. The village child had no routine planned for him, either for his physical or his psychological needs. There was no emphasis upon self-expression for the child, only upon conformity to the routine of the family.

858 593 Yet there was warmth and affection for the children. When a child died, the tempo of the household perceptibly slackened. "It is God's will. It is Kismet [Fate]," the family said, but the father grew more taciturn and the mother wept silently as she spun in the evenings. And when a funeral procession reached the cemetery, the new mourners often found there other mothers who had lost their children. These wailed again for the long-departed and begged the spirit of the newly dead to carry messages to their babies.

And when a family grew rich according to village standards, it was on the children that gifts were lavished, perhaps a wish-fulfillment by the elders inherited from their own drab childhood.

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178 234 began to compare the cost of feed with their income from milk and realized that they were losing money. As the war progressed the government bought more and more forage for military animals, feed costs went up, and dairying profits went down. Once this fact became evident and was noised throughout the village there was almost a wholesale withdrawal from dairying. Whereas three or four years before 1,300-1,400 kilos of milk were sold daily, by 1945 only 40 kilos were sold. The 1945 situation was aggravated by the excessively dry season and the reduced yield per cow from 15 liters daily down to 4 or 5. In other words, the number of cows fell off by as much as 90 per cent owing to the low prices of milk and feed difficulties. The peasants liked to mention the fact that *boza,* a fermented millet-seed drink which tastes like sour, liquefied chicken feed, sold for 40 leva a kilo and milk for only 22 leva.

178 233 The loss in dairying, temporary though it may prove to be, meant a corresponding gain in sheep-raising, with 1945 estimates of sheep numbers varying from 12,000 to 15,000. Sheep had also become popular because of the wool they made available for garments in the days of clothing shortage during and following the war. A return to sheep had created interesting social problems connected with pasturing. The sheepmen wanted to go back to the days when sheep could graze freely on uncultivated land, but many of the peasants wanted to keep pasturelands for their own use rather than common use.

178 ● 593 As I talked to the peasants and heard the concerns expressed by the parents and the aspirations voiced by the young, I began to realize that the family trends already under way in 1937 had progressed further than I would have anticipated. Parents, although very much interested, had less to say about the choice of mates for their sons and daughters. Some of them were quite skillful in making use of relatives to advise the young people in choices which the older members of the family group considered wise.

583 178 593 Brides were still stolen but, contrary to the case in former years, the girl could return home immediately if dissatisfied with the man desiring to become her husband. Shortly before I visited the village a young man had "captured" the girl of his choice and taken her to his father's home. When the girl's parents came to ask whether she chose

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to return or remain, the girl decided to go back to her parents. In 1937 this would have made her ineligible, in a sense, for further consideration as a wife. Now she simply explained that when the boy had asked her in advance if she would marry him she had thought that he was joking and told him "Yes," in what she considered to be a jesting manner. She was greatly surprised two weeks later to find that the boy had been serious. The whole affair turned out happily in the end because within another two weeks the young man had found a willing girl, had become engaged to her, and married her.

Another evidence that the family system was having to change to meet the stress of new times was the lack of social disapproval shown to widows and widowers who married persons previously unmarried. Heretofore, only widows and widowers could marry each other, and this was chiefly because of economic necessity. Although not yet common, it was a growing practice for a widower to take a fancy to a girl whom he later married. The age of marriage was becoming lower, dropping to 18 and 19 years for many of the couples. The engagement period still lasted only one or two weeks, a time sufficient to allow the girl to make her wedding preparations.

Accompanying these changes was a greater freedom among the young people both in relation to each other and in relation to their parents. The *sedenki* for young people followed practically the same patterns which I had previously observed but had not yet popularized the kissing games which featured *sedenki* in northern Bulgaria. Clandestine love-making was increasing as was the tendency on the part of the young people to pair off.

The changed relationship of sons to their fathers was shown by the failure of many of the sons to turn over their earnings to their parents as part of the common family treasury. Formerly more than half of the young men had followed this practice, but estimates in 1945 placed the number at approximately one out of ten.

Of especial interest was the pattern which younger couples were establishing after marriage. Whereas, ten years ago even the young wife would have given implicit obedience to her husband's orders, today many of the families were becoming equalitarian. The older women, however, still clung to the patriarchal pattern, though they

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were willing to grant that the changes introduced by the young people were a part of the times and might not be so bad after all. In talking to these older women I noted a touch of envy, which I would not have suspected ten years ago.

In contrast to these changes many phases of the family system remained the same. These included the attitude of intolerance towards a childless couple, the role of the mother-in-law in the caring for infants, the parents' preference for boys, the reserve between father and the children, the continued dwelling of many married sons with their fathers, and the importance attached to being an older brother or sister in the family. The godparent relationship and the attitude towards the *svatovstvo* (in-law relationships) were still of major importance.

The moral standards remained relatively rigid, with continuing intolerance toward illegitimacy. The one such case within the past ten years[1] had caused a great amount of unfavorable comment. The mother resolved her predicament by leaving her child with relatives in the village and marrying in another place.

Many other traditional practices besides those related to the family still maintained their strong grip on the people. The Christmas Horo took place as always and the Sunday afternoon promenade had become more firmly established. The *babi* (older women) were called in whenever illness or childbirth occurred. The smaller families, of course, numbered fewer children these days, but the *babi* were kept just as busy since the state-employed midwife no longer worked for the Obshtina. The dead were buried much the same as formerly, although the priest forbade people to cry messages to the dead while the funeral procession paused at the crossroads on the way from the home to the church.

The people still made much of the mice and wolf holidays. One day after St. Dimiter's Day (November 9) the peasants continued to fast to keep the mice from coming in and eating up not only stored food but even clothes and other prized possessions. Bai Yurdan, the tailor, told me in all seriousness, "When I was in Sofia I didn't observe such holidays but now that I am back in the village I must."

[1] [ie. 1935 - 1945 -- Analyst]